

Drug Impairment Training for Education Professionals (D.I.T.E.P)

Purpose of This Document:

The purpose of this training is to provide school administrators, teachers, and nurses with a systematic approach to recognizing and evaluating individuals in the academic environment who are using and are impaired by drugs, in order to provide early intervention. This training is not intended to qualify participants as drug recognition experts (DREs); rather its purpose is to aid in the evaluation and documentation of those suspected of using drugs and those impaired by drugs. For the purpose of this training, the definition of a drug is any substance that alters perception or behavior reducing that individual's ability to function appropriately in the academic environment. An increasing body of data suggests that an appreciable percentage of inappropriate behavior may be due to the influence of drugs and alcohol, either alone or in combination. Estimates of this appreciable percentage vary, but all estimates agree that the average professional educator will almost inevitably encounter impaired individuals from time to time. It is important, therefore, that the educator be able to recognize when he or she has encountered an impaired individual, and how to deal with this situation in the academic environment. This Administrator's Guide facilitates the planning and implementation of the module. The guide provides an overview of the two-day course of instruction, the documents, and other materials that make up the modules curriculum package. It describes the module's administrative requirements and offers guidelines for discharging those requirements satisfactorily. It outlines the preparatory work that must be accomplished by a law enforcement agency before the module can be offered. It describes the follow-up work that should be undertaken to ensure continued data collection in evaluating and charting the effectiveness of this program. Before addressing the details of this module, it is appropriate to emphasize one thing that the module will not do:

**THIS TRAINING WILL NOT QUALIFY AN OFFICER OR OTHER STUDENT TO SERVE
AS A DRUG RECOGNITION EXPERT.**

**The subject matter covered touches upon some (but not all) of the factors a DRE
considers in examining a drug-impaired individual.**

Overview of the Module:

For Whom Is the Training Intended?

This module is designed primarily for administrators, teachers, school resource officers, counselors, nurses and education trainers in the academic setting. The student who attends and completes the two-day program must be able to administer and interpret the horizontal gaze nystagmus test (HGN) for impaired individuals. The student should be fully conversant with the procedural mechanics of HGN, with the clues of HGN, and with the interpretation of clues for assessing impairment. A major focus of this module is on the examination of the impaired individual's eyes, and the procedures for those eye examinations are derived largely from HGN procedures.

What Are the Purposes of Module?

The purpose of the module is to improve an individual's ability to

- (1) recognize those who may be under the influence of drugs other than alcohol and
- (2) to take appropriate action when encountering such behavior.

Note that the purpose of this module does not require the attendees to develop the ability to distinguish what type of drug is responsible for the observed impairment. The students should become more adept at recognizing the possible presence of some drug category other than alcohol, or a medical condition, and at conveying a credible basis for that suspicion.

What Will the Students Get Out of the Module?

The student who successfully completes the module will be able to identify

- The term drug in the context of this course;
- The concept of drugs that impair in the academic environment;
- The drugs of choice within a community setting;
- The role of simple divided attention tests in accessing impairment;
- The observable effects of each of the seven major drug categories;
- The effects likely to result from various drug combinations;
- The importance of policies and procedures for dealing with cases involving drug-impaired individuals in the academic setting;
- The major drug categories;
- Medical conditions and other situations that can produce similar signs of impairment; and
- Appropriate procedures for dealing with drug-impaired or medically impaired individuals.

What Subject Matter Does the Module Cover?

The principal content topics include the following:

- (1) The concept of drugs in the educational environment. Basically, as far as the professional educator is concerned, a drug is a substance that impairs an individual's ability to function appropriately in an academic environment.
- (2) The magnitude and scope of drug use and abuse in our educational system, and the involvement of drugs in impaired incidents.
- (3) The role of eye examinations in disclosing the possibility of drug impairment, and in suggesting the possible category or categories of drugs, or medical conditions causing a particular individual's impairment.
- (4) The observable effects of each of the seven major drug categories.
- (5) The effects likely to result from various drug combinations.
- (6) The individual state's prescribed procedures for dealing with cases involving individuals suspected of drug influence or medical conditions.